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Easter Interpreted.

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Citations from

✓
Robert Browning.



Chosen and Arranged

by

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Prefatory.



ESPITE Robert Browning's sympathy with the all-embracing research, exhaustive analysis and unsparing criticism which distinguishes the age, when he speaks of God and immortality his words are clear and pronounced as the notes of a well-tuned bell, while his anticipations of a blessed hereafter ring out in cadence "most musical, most sweet." The following citations, which are culled from a number of poems, accentuate this. They emphasize, also, the harmony of sentiment and unity of thought, which so environed Browning's hopes of life after death; and

because of this under-tone harmony, they read as one mighty, on-flowing poem, rather than as extracts from various verses.

But enough, Browning is his own interpreter, and our part is to listen with reverence while he sings of "the known to the unknown," of "Heaven's *shall be*, from earth's *has been*."



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Rest Remaineth.



ASTER-DAY breaks!

Christ rises! Mercy every
way is infinite—

Earth breaks up; time drops
away;

In flows Heaven, with its new day
Of endless life—

What is left for us, save, in growth
Of soul to rise up, . . .

From the gift looking to the giver,
And from the cistern to the river,
And from the finite to infinity,
And from man's dust to God's divinity."

A Soul's Warfare.

“Remember what a martyr said :

I was born sickly, poor and mean,

A slave . . .

I was some time in being burned,

But at the close a Hand came through

The fire above my head, and drew

My soul to Christ, whom *now I see*.

So, the All-Great, was the All-Loving too.”

Spiritual Insight.

“There’s Heaven above, and night by night

I look right through its gorgeous roof ;

No suns and moons though e’er so bright

Avail to stop me . . .

For I intend to get to God,

For ’tis to God I speed so fast,

For in God’s breast, my own abode,

I lay my spirit down at last.”

“Then comes a Voice, saying,
O heart I made . . .
Love I gave thee . . .
And thou must love Me who hath died for
thee !”

The Soul's Growth.

“When the fight begins within himself,
A man's worth something . . .
Prolong that battle through his life !
Never leave growing till the life to come !
Next life relieves the soul of body, yields
Pure spiritual enjoyment; well, my friend,
Why lose this life o' the meantime, since *its*
use
May be to make the next life more intense?”

“I say that man was made to grow, not stop.
. . . Man should mount on each
New height in view” . . .

“Stung by straitness of our life, made strait
On purpose to make prized the life at large—
Freed by the throbbing impulse we call
death.

We burst *There* as the worm into the fly,
Who while a worm still wants his wings.”

Nothing Lost.

“To whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable
Name?

Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not
made with hands!

What, have fear of change from Thee who
art ever the same?

Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart
that Thy power expands?

There shall never be one lost good! What
was, shall live as before;

The evil is null, is nought, is silence im-
p'ying sound;

What was good shall be good, with, for evil,
so much good more,

On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven
a perfect round,

All we have willed, or hoped, or dreamed of
good, shall exist ;

Not its semblance, but itself, no beauty, nor
good, nor power,

Whose voice has gone forth, but each sur-
vives for the melodist,

When eternity affirms the conception of an
hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic
for earth too hard.

The passion that left the ground to lose it-
self in the sky,

Are music sent up to God by the lover and
the bard ;

Enough that He heard it once ; we shall
hear it by-and-by."

In God's Hand.

“ Ay, note the Potter's wheel,
That metaphor . . .
. . . Perfect the cup is planned !
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same ; ”

“ Deep within my heart of hearts,
Ever the confidence amends for all
That Heaven—in that new world where
light and darkness fuse,—
Repairs what wrong earth's journey did.”

After Earth—Heaven.

“ O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee
again,
And with God be the rest.”

“He was made aware how dear is death,
How lovable the dead are, how the heart
Yearnings in us to hide where they repose.”

“Heaven’s beyond earth,” and
“I suppose Heaven is, through Eternity,
The equalizing, ever and anon,
In momentary rapture, great and small,
Omniscience with intelligency, God with
man . . .
. . . There’s the Heaven for me,
And I say, therefore, to live out one’s life
I’ the world here, with chance—whether by
pain
Or pleasure be the process, long or short
The time, august or mean the circumstances
To human eye—of learning how set foot,
Decidedly on some one path to Heaven,
This makes it worth our while to tenderly

Handle a state of things which mend we
might;

Mar we may, but which meanwhile helps
so far."

And yet,

"A mortal glance might pierce, methinks,
Deeper into the heart of things,

And learn, no fruit man's life can bear will
fade."

"Death reads the title clear —

What each soul for itself conquered from
out things here"

"And God will estimate success one day."

"Oh, how all the more will love become in-
tense

"Hereafter, when, 'to love' means yearning
to dispense

Each soul, its own amount of gain through
its own mode

Of practicing with life . . .

Why doubt a time succeeds
When each one may impart, and each re-
ceive?"

"Remember the individual soul works
through the show of sense
Up to an outer soul as individual, too;
And, through the fleeting, lives to die into
the fixed
And reach at length God, man, or both, to-
gether mixed."

"Is it for nothing we grow old and weak,
We whom God loves? When pain ends, gain
ends too,
For love, with all it yields of joy and woe
And hope and fear . . .
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning
love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;
And that we hold thenceforth, to the utter-
most

Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And having gained truth, keep truth; that
is all.

But we see the double way wherein we are
led,

How the soul learns diversely from the
flesh!

With flesh, that hath so little time to stay!

Then as new lessons shall be learned in
these

Till earth's work stops and useless time runs
out

The love that tops—the Christ in God.”

Soul—Flight.

“Dying, we Live!

Soul that canst soar!

Body may slumber;

Body shall cumber

Soul—flight no more.”

“Henceforth, no certainty more plain
Than that after body dies, soul lives again.
 . . . God is, and the soul is, and, as
 certain after death shall be
The time for using fact !
Life to come will be improvement on the
 life that’s now . . .
O’er this life the next presents advantages
 much and manifold.
I affirm and reaffirm it, therefore,
As that man now lives, that after dying
 man will live again.
What though, as on earth he darkling
 grovels, man descry the sphere
Next life’s—call it, Heaven of freedom
 . . . Close above and crystal-clear !
Henceforth, man’s existence bows to the
 monition—Wait !
Take the joys and bear the sorrows—
 neither with extreme concern ;

Living here means nescience simply ; 'tis
next life that helps to learn.

Shut those eyes, next life will open ;

Stop those ears, next life will teach

Hearings office ; close those lips, next life
will give the power of speech.

. . . Soon shall things be unperplexed

} And the right and wrong now tangled lie
unraveled in the next."

"Certainly as God exists,

As He made man's soul, as soul is quench-
less by the deathly mists

Yet is, all the same, forbidden premature
escape from time

To eternity's provided purer air and
brighter clime.

Just so certainly depends it on the use to
which man turns

Earth, the good or evil done there, whether
after death he earns

Life eternal—Heaven—the phrase be, or
eternal death—say Hell.

As his deeds, so proves his portion, doing ill
or doing well ! ”

The Future.

“The Future—that’s

Our destination, mists turn rainbows
There.”

“Death touches the eyes

And shows God granted most, denying all ! ”

“’Tis willed so—that man’s life be lived first
to last,

Up and down, through and through, not in
portions, forsooth,

To pick and to choose from, our shuttles
fly fast,

Weave living, not life sole and whole ; as
age, youth,

So death completes living, shows life in its
truth.

Earth its race-ground, Heaven its goal."

"After earth comes peace

Born out of life-long battle."

From Height to Height.

"What were life

Did soul stand still therein, forego her strife
Through the ambiguous Present to the goal
Of some all-reconciling Future?

Soul—nothing has been which shall not
bettered be

Hereafter—leave the root, by law's decree
Whence springs the ultimate and perfect
tree!

Busy thee with unearthing root? Nay,
climb—

Quit trunk, branch, leaf and flower—reach
rest sublime.

Where fruitage ripens in the blaze of day,
Be assured, come what come will,
What once lives never dies—what here
attains

To a beginning has no end, still gains
And never loses aught; when, where, how—
Lies in law's lap."

God Loves.

God loves us and all that errs,
Is a strange dream which death will dis-
sipate.

Be sure that God
Ne'er dooms to waste the strength He
deigns impart!

Be sure they sleep not whom God needs."

I go to prove my soul!

I see my way as birds their trackless way.

I shall arrive ! what time, what circuit first,
I ask not . . . but . . .
In some time, His good time, I shall arrive;
He guides me and the bird."

"True, I am worn ;
But who clothes summer, who is life itself ?
God, that created all things, can renew !
And then, though after-life to please me
now
Must have no likeness to the past, what
hinders
Reward from springing out of toil, as
changed
As bursts the flower from earth and root
and stalk !"

"Meanwhile, things learned on earth
We shall practice in Heaven.
Only the scales to be changed, that's all."

“And when a soul has seen
By the means of Evil that Good is best,
And through earth and its noise, what is
Heaven’s serene—
When our faith in the same has stood the
test—
Why, the child, grown man, you burn the
rod,
The uses of labor are surely done ;
There remaineth a rest for the people of
God.”

“I believe it ! ’Tis Thou, God, that giveth,
’tis I who receive ;
In the first is the last, in Thy will is my
power to believe
. . . Salvation joins issue with death !
As Thy Love is discovered almighty, al-
mighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of
being Beloved !

He who did most shall bear most ; the
strongest shall stand the most weak.

'Tis the weakness in strength I cry for ! my
flesh, that I seek

In the Godhead ! I seek and I find it—it
shall be

A Face like my face that recieves thee ;

A Man like to me

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever ;

A Hand like this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to
thee !

See—the Christ stands !”

All Things New.

“Think when our one soul understands
The great Word which shall make all things
new,

When earth breaks up and therein expands,
How will the change strike me and you

In the house not made with hands ?
Surely the gain of earth must be Heaven's
gain too."

A Reverent Pause.

"Oh, never star
Was lost here but it rose afar !
We all aspire to Heaven, and there is
Heaven
Above us ; go then ! Dare we go ? No
surely !
How dare we go without a reverent pause,
A growing less unfit for Heaven ?
Now, raise thee, clay !
God ! Thou art Love ! I build my faith in
that !
If I stoop
Into a dark, tremendous sea of cloud
It is but for a time ; I press God's lamp

Close to my heart ; its splendors, soon or
late,

Will pierce the gloom, I shall emerge one
day.

You understand me? I have said enough !”

Easter=Day breaks !

Christ rises !

Mercy every way is Infinite!



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